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PRESS RELEASE

USAID helps Macedonian apparel companies increase value-added exports by moving towards full-package brand production

On June 25, 2008, the USAID Competitiveness Project, in collaboration with the Textile Trade Association–Textile Cluster, awarded certificates to seven textile companies whose employees completed the Gerber CAD/CAM software training. The intense 10-day training course will allow these leading apparel companies to move towards full-package production, thus increasing value-added exports of Macedonian textile brands.

“The survival and growth of the apparel sector in Macedonia in the next two to three years is only possible with complete transformation to full-package brand production,” said Vlado Netkov, President of the Textile Trade Association–Textile Cluster at the award ceremony. “The first pre-requisite to adopting full-package is establishing modeling and designing departments, as well as effective use of the CAD/CAM technology.”

“With this training and other interventions, USAID/Macedonia continues to support the efforts of Macedonian apparel companies to increase full-package production volume, thus promoting their competitiveness in the global market,” commented Margareta Lipkovska–Atanasov, USAID Economic Growth Specialist. “These interventions will help the apparel industry retain jobs and increase potential for long-term growth.”

The training was delivered by Slovenian training expert Slavka Jelnicar of Gregorcic Zastupstvo, regional representation of Gerber Technologies. The trainees are expected to deliver the training to three employees in each of their companies, increasing the local capacity in CAD/CAM software operation to 24 specialists. In addition, the participants received training in two software packages that improve production line management, including monitoring and supervision of apparel production, and developing standard time period for technological operations.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The American people, through USAID, have invested nearly \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that increase investment, create jobs, reduce corruption and improve the quality of education in Macedonia. These initiatives support Macedonia’s transition to a stable democracy and its successful integration into the European Union. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.